

The Tragedy of Hamlet

His greatnes waide, his will is not his owne,
He may not as vnalewed persons doe,
Crave for himselfe, for on his choise depends
The safety and health of this whole state,
And therefore must his choise be circumscrib'd,
Vnto the voyce and yeelding of that body,
Whereof he is the head, then if he saies he loues you,
It fits your wisdom so farre to beleue it
As he in his particuler act and place
May giue his saying deede, which is no further,
Then the maine voyce of Denmarke goes withall.
Then way what losse your honor may sustaine,
If with too credent eare you list his songs
Or loose your heart, or your chaste treasure open,
To his vnmastred importunity.
Feare it Ophelia, feare it my deare sister,
And keepe you in the reare of your affection
Out of the shot and danger of desire,
„The charest maide is prodigall enough
If she vnmaske her beauty to the Moone
„Vertue it selfe scapes not calumnious strokes
„The canker gaules the infant of the spring
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd,
And in the morne and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent,
Be wary then, best safety lies in feare,
Youth to it selfe rebels though none else neare.

Ophe. I shall the effect of this good lesson keepe,
As watchmen to my heart, but good my brother
Doe not as some vngracious pastors doe,
Show me the steepe and thorny way to heauen
Whiles a puffed, and reckles libertine,
Himselfe the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And reakes not his owne reed.

Enter Polonius.

Laer. O feare me not,
I stay too long, but heere my father comes
A double blessing, is a double grace,
Occasion smiles vpon a second leaue.

Pol. Yet here *Laertes*? a bord, a bord for shame,

Prince of Denmarke.

The wind sits in the shoulder of your saile,
And you are staied for, there my blessing with thee,
And these few precepts in thy memory.
Looke thou character, giue thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any vnproportion'd thought his act,
Be thou familer, but by no meanes vulgar,
Those friends thou hast and their adoption tried,
Grapple them vnto thy soule with hoopes of Steele,
But do not dull thy palme with entertainment
Of each new hatcht vnstedg'd courage; beware
Of entrance to a quarrell, but being in,
Bear't that th'opposer may beware of thee.
Giue euery man thy eare, but few thy voyce,
Take each mans censure, but reserve thy iudgement.
Costly thy habite as thy purse can buy,
But not exprest in fancy; rich not gaudy,
For the apparrell oft proclaimes the man:
And they in France of the best ranck and station,
Or of a most select and generous, cheefe in that:
Neither a borrower nor a lender boy,
For loue oft looses both it selfe, and friend,
And borrowing dulleth the edge of husbandry:
This aboue all, to thine owne selfe be true
And it must follow as the night the day
Thou canst not then bee false to any man:
Farewell, my blessing season this in thee.

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leaue my Lord.

Pol. The time inuests you, goe, your seruants tend,

Laer. Farewell *Ophelia*, and remember well
What I haue said to you.

Ophe. Tis in my memory lockt
And you your selfe shall keepe the key of it.

Laer. Farewell *Exit. Laertes.*

Pol. What ist *Ophelia* hee hath said to you?

Ophe. So please you, something touching the Lord *Hamlet*.

Pol. Marry well berthought

Tis told me hee hath very oft of late

Giuen priuate time to you, and you your selfe

Haue of your audience beene most free and bountious,